

## CLAIMS

We claim:

- 1 1. A method for providing procurement services to a  
2 plurality of customer companies, comprising the steps of:
  - 3 establishing a user profile for each person authorized  
4 by a customer company to access said procurement  
5 services;
  - 6 associating each said company with a company group of  
7 related companies;
  - 8 said user profile specifying for each said user a user  
9 company and company group;
  - 10 providing for each procurement resource to be shared  
11 among said users a resource profile specifying for each  
12 resource those said companies to have access to said  
13 procurement resource; and

14 responsive to said user profile and said resource  
15 profiles, controlling user access to said procurement  
16 resources.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of  
2 providing said procurement resources in a front-end catalog  
3 and requisition server.

1 3. The method of claim 2, further comprising the steps of:  
2  
3 receiving a user request from a first client browser to  
log in to said front-end server;  
4  
5 responsive to said request, providing a user interface  
6 at said client browser only to procurement resources  
7 authorized by said user profile and said resource  
profiles.

1 4. The method of claim 2, further comprising the steps of:  
2  
3 receiving requests from a plurality of users authorized  
by different company groups to enter a requisition to a

4 vendor with respect to the same catalog or contract  
5 resource; and

6 generating separate purchase orders to said vendor with  
7 respect to requisitions originating with users from  
8 each said company group.

1 5. The method of claim 4, further comprising the steps of:  
2 leveraging procurement buys from a plurality of company  
3 groups with respect to the same volume specific  
4 contract for goods or services.

1 6. The method of claim 2, further comprising the steps of:  
2 allowing said user to apply procurement charges to  
3 charge centers only within his company group.

1 7. The method of claim 3, said procurement resources  
2 including a vendor catalog.

1 8. The method of claim 3, said procurement resources  
2 including a blanket order procurement contract for goods or  
3 services.

1 9. The method of claim 3, said procurement resources  
2 including a user profile table.

1 10. The method of claim 3, said procurement resources  
2 including costs centers.

1 11. The method of claim 3, said procurement resources  
2 including accounting general ledger codes with company group  
3 specific accounting rules and defaults.

1 12. System for providing procurement services to a  
2 plurality of customer companies, comprising:

3 a front end server;

4 a user profile for each person authorized by a customer  
5 company to access said procurement services;

6 each said company associated with a company group of  
7 related companies;

8 said user profile specifying for each said user a user  
9 company and company group;

10 a plurality of procurement resources to be shared among  
11 said users;

12 a resource profile for each said procurement resource  
13 specifying those said companies to have access to said  
14 procurement resource; and

15 said user profile and said resource profiles for  
16 controlling user access to said procurement resources.

1 13. The system of claim 12, said procurement resources  
2 further comprising:

3 vendor catalog;

4 a blanket order procurement contract for goods or  
5 services; and

6 a table of user profiles.

1 14. The system of claim 12, said procurement resources  
2 further comprising:

3 costs centers; and

4 accounting general ledger codes with company group  
5 specific accounting rules and defaults.

1 15. A program storage device readable by a machine,  
2 tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by a  
3 machine to perform method steps for providing procurement  
4 services to a plurality of customer companies, said method  
5 steps comprising:

6 establishing a user profile for each person authorized  
7 by a customer company to access said procurement  
8 services;

9 associating each said company with a company group of  
10 related companies;

11 said user profile specifying for each said user a user  
12 company and company group;

13 providing for each procurement resource to be shared  
14 among said users a resource profile specifying for each  
15 resource those said companies to have access to said  
16 procurement resource; and

17 responsive to said user profile and said resource  
18 profiles, controlling user access to said procurement  
19 resources.

1 16. The program storage device of claim 15, said method  
2 steps further comprising providing said procurement  
3 resources in a front-end catalog and requisition server.

1 17. The program storage device of claim 16, said method  
2 steps further comprising the steps of:

3 receiving a user request from a first client browser to  
4 log in to said front-end server;

5 responsive to said request, providing a user interface

6 at said client browser only to procurement resources  
7 authorized by said user profile and said resource  
8 profiles.

1 18. The program storage device of claim 16, said method  
2 steps further comprising the steps of:

3 receiving requests from a plurality of users authorized  
4 by different company groups to enter a requisition to a  
5 vendor with respect to the same catalog or contract  
6 resource; and

7 generating separate purchase orders to said vendor with  
8 respect to requisitions originating with users from  
9 each said company group.

1 19. The program storage device of claim 18, said method  
2 steps further comprising the steps of:

3 leveraging procurement buys from a plurality of company  
4 groups with respect to the same volume specific  
5 contract for goods or services.



1 20. The program storage device of claim 16, said method  
2 steps further comprising the steps of:

3 allowing said user to apply procurement charges to  
4 charge centers only within his company group.

1 21. The program storage device of claim 17, said  
2 procurement resources including a vendor catalog.

1 22. The program storage device of claim 17, said  
2 procurement resources including a blanket order procurement  
3 contract for goods or services.

1 23. The program storage device of claim 17, said  
2 procurement resources including a user profile table.

1 24. The program storage device of claim 17, said  
2 procurement resources including costs centers.

1 25. The program storage device of claim 17, said

2 procurement resources including accounting general ledger  
3 codes with company group specific accounting rules and  
4 defaults.

1 26. A computer program product or computer program element  
2 for providing procurement services to a plurality of  
3 customer companies according to method steps comprising:

4 establishing a user profile for each person authorized  
5 by a customer company to access said procurement  
6 services;

7 associating each said company with a company group of  
8 related companies;

9 said user profile specifying for each said user a user  
10 company and company group;

11 providing for each procurement resource to be shared  
12 among said users a resource profile specifying for each  
13 resource those said companies to have access to said  
14 procurement resource; and

15 responsive to said user profile and said resource

